

over her mind, long before the Arian controversy arose.

The upshot of the whole matter—however the change was brought about—was that in the year 329, the Arian and Eusebian party was paramount at the Imperial Court. They had persuaded the Emperor that theirs was the party of reason, and that those who persisted in troubling the peace of the Church by holding extreme views and seeking to impose rigorous tests were the followers of the new Patriarch of Alexandria. They had subscribed to the Nicene Creed or to a Creed which—so they persuaded the Emperor—was practically indistinguishable from it, and they now plotted, with great skill and adroitness, to undermine the position of Athanasius. How they conducted the intrigue we do not know, but it is significant that after the break up of the Council of Nicaea we hear no more, during Constantine's lifetime, of his long-trusted adviser Hosius, Bishop of Cordova. The dreadful tragedies in the Imperial Family had taken place at Rome in the summer of 326. It is possible that Hosius made no secret of his horror at these monstrous crimes and retired to his Spanish bishopric, and that Eusebius of Nicomedia, when brought into communication with Constantine, was not so exacting in his demand for a show of penitence and proved more skilful in allaying the Emperor's remorse. Be that as it may, as soon as Eusebius felt assured of his position, he lost no time in prosecuting a vigorous campaign against those who had triumphed over him at Nicsea. The first blow was